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For Immediate Release
December 6, 2006

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Bill limiting billboards headed to governor

LANSING –Legislation aimed at preserving the view from Michigan’s highways has been approved by the Legislature and is on its way to the governor, said Sen. Tom George, R-Texas Township.

Senate Bill 567, sponsored by George, would amend the Highway Advertising Act to prohibit the Michigan Department of Transportation from issuing any new billboard permits. It gives companies with an outstanding permit one year to either construct the billboard or turn in the permit.

“With 14,000 billboards, Michigan has the second highest count of billboards in the nation and we are at a saturation point,” George said. “We take pride in the state’s natural beauty and we should take great care to keep it looking nice and free from further distractions.”

If a company does not want to erect a billboard within the year, and it has multiple outstanding permits, it is eligible to turn in three permits for one indefinite permit. This would allow the company to construct a billboard in the future should a new highway be built in the state.

The bill also allows a company to move a current billboard from one location to another.

SB 567 is tie-barred to SB 568, which would establish a permit process for removal of vegetation and other growth from around highway advertising signs or billboards. This bill also was sent to the governor’s desk today.

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